



## **Marine Safety Information Bulletin 10-13 August 29, 2013**

### **VHF Radiotelephone Communications Standards**

Reports published by both the National Transportation Safety Board and the U.S. Coast Guard concerning the January 23, 2010, allision, collision, and subsequent crude oil spill involving the tanker EAGLE OTOME and towing vessel DIXIE VENGEANCE noted, as a contributing factor, that mariners on the Sabine-Neches Waterway were not using vessel names and charted locations in VHF radiotelephone transmissions.

Title 47, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 80.331 (bridge-to-bridge radiotelephone communication procedures) contains the proper format for initiating radiotelephone communications; specifically, use of the name of the station being called, followed by the procedure word "THIS IS," followed by the name of the station initiating the transmission. Also, the International Maritime Organization's Standard Marine Communication Phrases (Resolution A.918 (22)) states that when a reported position is related to a mark, "the mark will be a well-defined charted object."

In the incident mentioned herein, the exercise of proper radiotelephone procedures might have mitigated secondary consequences of the initial accident. Moreover, following proper radiotelephone procedures might serve to prevent future accidents. Mariners should expect that investigations into future marine incidents will consider whether or not "non-standard" communications may have contributed to an incident. I strongly encourage all mariners to comply with required and regulated radiotelephone procedures and etiquette.

This notice will be posted on the Coast Guard's HOMEPORT website at <http://homeport.uscg.mil> and the VTS website at [www.uscg.mil/d8/vtspportarthur](http://www.uscg.mil/d8/vtspportarthur). If you have any questions regarding this notice, please call VTS Port Arthur at (409) 719-5086.

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Captain of the Port